

1959: A BioShock Story

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Summary: Events detailing the Fall of Rapture from the point of view of two citizens; the grey area of morality is larger than they thought. Collaborative fiction.

1. Fleet Hall

****E/****

With a triumphant slam, Sander Cohen descended onto his piano to the sound of shouting - which he mistakenly took as applause. Despite his obvious loose screws, he was enduring to his audience. Or perhaps it was blindness; madness mixed with madness sounded about right. That could be the only explanation for his response to the uproar Fleet Hall was experiencing. Chairs were thrown, people were arguing, and apparently a minor fire had been extinguished in the bar. Even higher class members of society were tipping their drinks from the boxes, as if to add yet another leak to the city. I had already sat an hour of scratchy muffled music between two brutes who had tried to get close to me multiple times. I was trapped between them, and I could see how lazy their eyes were, and how their veins oozed when one took a hold of my knee. I could see the thick green substance spilling from the corner of their mouths, and I felt a bitter, burning fury.

Fleet Hall had once been one of Rapture's many "jewels". Its stream lined symmetrical architecture covered both geometric shapes and human forms in dull reds, greens and gold. Although the art deco style was old news topside, in Rapture it was still very admiring of modernism and innovation. It was certainly an elegant contrast to what was outside of Fleet Hall. The entrance to Fort Frolic was plastered with gaudy neon signs, so this theatre had always been a more relaxing, sophisticated sight for my eyes, but certainly not my ears. Now Fleet Hall was crumbling inwards from its angular sides - just another flood waiting to happen. I had even stepped over a tipped trashcan on the way in, filled with leftover eve hypos, stinking of blood and ADAM.

Once the performance was over, people began to scatter and one of Cohen's disciples Kyle Fitzpatrick took over the piano and played us out. I saw my window, and scooted through the stalls to make a quick exit. A cracked scuffle on the triangle tiled floor made me stumble, but I caught myself in time. I was held up at the back doors due to a technical malfunction. Usually the elegant glass and gold doors were held open, but now they were clanging up and down, only letting one person through at a time. The pale, sluggish crowd was getting impatient, but it gave me a moment to remember the tiny card cutting into my pocket â€" good for one free drink.

The bar was a mix of mumbling, nicotine and that awful significant smell of ADAM. It wasn't anything I wasn't used to, but it did bring back some memories that should really remain at the clinic. Never the less, I ordered my drink and sat myself at an empty barstool between two women who had certainly struggled to apply their makeup properly â€" their lipstick was stretched up to their ears. It triggered a smile, but then one of the distorted faces became vaguely familiar.

"Jane?"

She turned to me, her eyes drooping and the skin around her mouth peeling away under a heap of red lipstick. I regretted getting her attention due to the dead look I received but there was no backing down now: "How are you, Jane?"

She always had a painful giggle but hearing it this time made me shudder. Through a shrill but sultry voice she primped her hair and spoke:

"Steinman just fixed me up. Don't I look beautiful?"

"You looking stunning," I said, afraid of any consequences, "You're glowing; absolutely radiant."

"Thank you," another giddy shriek, "Maybe Mr. Cohen will finally notice me, then I'll be a star!"

A nearby objection distracted her, and she fell into an argument with another woman. I turned to my now empty drink, relieved to be away from the short conversation. Looking at the pink veins scratching across her entire face had made my stomach turn.

"Hey," I leaned over the bar and waved my hand to the bartender, "Excuse me, can I get another drink over here?" He turned around, his face half drooping down and an eve hypo plunged into his arm, mumbling to himself. Perhaps I was wasting my time. There was a subtle hush and loll in the air, and I turned around on my barstool to leave before things got even more uncomfortable.

I suddenly came face to face with blank eyes concealed behind one of those porcelain bunny masks â€" a trend set about by Sander Cohen himself. Lately they had been used to cover up botched surgeries or facial disfigurements from ADAM, but this man had an aura of...humanity. He bowed politely, and I instinctively held out my hand for him to take. He silently led me off to the side of the bar where it was empty.

He removed his mask and my suspicions were correct. Despite a few scratches creeping up from his collar, he didn't seem spliced at all â€" at least not to the point of madness. I guess the mask trend had come full circle, and now it only hides those who still resemble a human, to protect them. Perhaps I should invest in one.

"You're not one of them?" He asked quietly, "The addicts? Are you?" He showed the biggest glimmer of civilisation I had seen in weeks, in just a few words.

"No, I am certainly not," I stared at him in an awe that was strangely defensive, "I worked hard to get into Rapture and I didn't want to take any shortcuts to brains â€" I paused to look over at Jane, "- or beauty or whatever the hell they're putting in themselves."

He smiled slightly at me, either in understanding or the way that I recoiled from him â€" I wasn't sure.

"I must say," He sighed, folding his arms and looking at me after a pause, "You stand out in a crowd. No mask or anything; such beauty in a time so dark."

The sounds from the bar became restless as some of Atlas' followers stirred trouble â€" a whole arsenal of weapons at their side. It distracted me but I was still standing with this man, just staring at him.

"That's charming, really," I took a hesitant step back to glance at the splicers, "I'm assuming you don't splice?"

There was a smash of glass followed by two gunshots and I shuddered, frantically looking around with wide eyes.

"Not particularly," The man said, unfazed by the violence, "Guy on your left."

A splicer suddenly took a hold of my arm and I yelped, his teeth bared and flesh seeping out from his eyes socket. The man flexed his hand and shoved the splicer away from me, so that he scampered away into a raging fistfight that had broken out over Fleet Hall.

"That's my cue to leave I think," I became flustered and my face was burning, "These nutcases are the reason I haven't left the house in a few weeks. I think I'd prefer to stay inside from now on."

I spoke quickly and strode towards the exit, leaving the man swiftly before he stopped me with a hand on my shoulder:

"You don't want to go that way." He indicated the escalated shouts and maniacal laughter from the bar, dense with the thick smell of salt and persistent clanging music.

"Where do we â€" I mean â€" where do I go then?" I shrugged his hand off my shoulder and turned to him. He looked me up and down in contemplation.

"Well, miss...?" He took notice of my evening gown, "Miss Overtly Dressed; you follow me."

He disappeared down a small "Staff Only" entryway, and I paused at the doorway.

"Fine," I called after him as he moved down the stairwell smoothly, "But no deceit, please. I have a gun and I know how to use it."

This was not an empty threat; I could feel the weight of my revolver in my handbag. He stopped to smile at me with his tongue touching his canines in amusement: "I'm sure you do. Let's go."

****A/N:**** A collaborative fiction. Each chapter was designed impromptu between two people, and then rewritten properly. This chapter was rewritten by myself, and the next is rewritten by my partner. I hope the writing styles do not throw you off at all. I'll mark the author at the beginning of the chapter.

2. Prologue

****A/****

The crowd laughs and swings with the act on stage. But not in unison, their voices a clamour of spliced up slurs. Their faces and eyes twisted into gnarled and gruelling patterns, once great minds reduced to the very thing they sought to get away from.

I am stood just off stage, as Sander Cohen's body guard. Wasn't good enough to be in the play, but looked tough enough to be his muscle. I keep my mouth closed as the higher in society wander around me, talking in shrill voices. Even the men. They hate what they have become. I see it.

Cohen wraps up his act to a crowd unfitting for such lavish surroundings. The curtain closes and he walks to me, a fist full of 20's in his hand.

"For your services my good man, while you lack the basic requirements to be a performer, your act as muscle and brawn are surpassed by none," I roll my eyes as he speaks, but he doesn't notice, "Now, if you excuse me, I have matters to attend to, so go, enjoy your night and your well earned spoils, I am sure there are a hundred ladies fitted to yourâ€¦" he looks at me again, then pulls a face as if his martini had one too many lemon peels in it.

"My what?" I raise an eyebrow. He merely tuts, and walks off. Asshole. But I follow his advice nonetheless. I walk out behind the curtain, the crowd becoming rowdy now. I pull a porcelain mask from a table as I walk. Ryan's men might still be looking for me, after the mess I left at his office. I slip it on over my face, and then walk into the crowd, shoving through drunks and splicers. They have no respect, for anything. Only ADAM. The genetic material that made them like they are. It allows humans to surpass their humanity, in exchange for godlike powers. I must say I see the attraction, and I'm not so naive to have never tried it before, but it has its flaws.

I hear two women in conversation, one talking of how her surgery went with Steinman. Her face looks like a china doll, cracked and too perfect. But the other woman would never say that. I watch her as she walks to the bar; I wonder if I could buy her a drink. But I stop that thought. Something is wrong here. I see Ryan's men at the

entrance to the Fleet Hall.

"Shit," I grumble, and make my way to the woman, the splicers pushing and shoving. Fights breaking out now, and amid all this, this woman, in a blue backless dress, trying to order a drink. She looks lost. Like she doesn't belong. Then, an idea. This lady is my ticket out of here. She looks fancy enough to know people who can get me out of this underwater Hell. Worth a shot, right?

End
file.